

**It's About Your Heart Not Your Hands** (Mark 7:1-23)

**Proposition:** Is man innately good and needs only moral and religious direction to over come bad nurture? Or is he innately sinful and wicked by nature and in need of radical transformation? I want us to review this teaching of the Lord Jesus and come to some conclusions about this age old question.

- I. The Spurious Charge of the Pharisees (Vs. 1-5)
  - A. A Fault-Finding Charge (Vs. 2)
  - B. A Unfounded Charge (Vs. 3-4)
  - C. A Faith Charge (Vs. 5)
- II. The Stinging Condemnation of Proof (Vs. 6-13)
  - A. The Examination of the Proof (Vs. 6-8)
  - B. The Example of the Proof (Vs. 9-12)
  - C. The Effect of the Proof (Vs. 13)
- III. The Straightforward Communication to the People (Vs. 14-16)
  - A. A Communication Concerning True Righteousness (Vs. 15)
  - B. A Communication Concerning True Religion (Vs. 15)
- IV. The Stunning Clarification to His Pupils (Vs. 17-23)
  - A. Outward Ceremony Does Not Cleanse (Vs. 18-19)
  - B. Inward Sin Is What Corrupts (Vs. 20-23)

It's about your Heart not Hands (Mark 7: 1-23)

Several years ago I was given quite a few boxes of Christian book. In these books was something I'd never seen before. It was a comic book version of the gospel of Mark.

The comic moved from scene to scene in vivid colors all the things that Jesus did. But I gossiped over much of what He said. Although the gospel of Mark is an action packed vivid portrait of the Servant of Jehovah in action, it does not minimise what Jesus said + taught. As a matter of fact the path to Calvary was not so much paved by the deeds of Jesus, it is what he said that angered the religious hierarchy of the day.

I. The Spurious Charge of the Pharisees (vs 1-5)

The chapter opens with the eagle-eyed Pharisees swooping in for what they thought was

A. A Fault-Finding Charge (vs 2) - Can you see them perched near by like birds of prey waiting for just the right moment to swoop in for a kill! 'Aa-ha! They didn't wash. We wash! This is just not right! What a wicked spirit and yet a familiar spirit!

So many times when we get a whiff of something dark

B. An Unfounded Charge (vs 3-4) - These washings were designated to the priests in Lev. These were ceremonial washings mind you, Rituals. Children wash hands. But too

the pharisees <sup>1</sup> showed their clean standing before God. These washings were tradition that scribes + pharisees laid on the people

**C. A Faith Charge (Vs 5)** - This reliance on outward ritual runs in direct opposition to the principle of faith. The accusation is that your disciples have sinned and not right with God because they don't wash! But Abraham did not please God because he washed... because of faith? The Just shall

## **II. The Stingy Condemnation of Proof (6-13)**

These pharisees got more than they bargained for. The word made flesh <sup>and things living</sup> opened his mouth

### **A. The Examination of the Proof (Vs 6-8)**

Hypocrites! Mask wearers! Actors that portrayed before an audience one thing, and but behind the mask were another! You pray quishing lines of love for God and have a heart at a cold distance. God guard our hearts from such worship that is only outward hand wash.

**B. The Example of the Proof (Vs 9-12)** - The gloves are coming off. You say love God and revere his word. They had a tradition that had developed. Instead of honoring their father + mother in old age. They would declare their wealth Corban or gift to God. Supposedly to give to Temple. In reality gave a kick back to priest and kept

**C. The Effect of the Proof (Vs 13)** - Their traditions turn the law on God on its head to

1) ...hierarchy of the day. Teachings as such as are before us tonight, not only angered the Pharisees of Jesus day but anger many religions of our day. It's the age old question concerning nature or nurture. Is man innately good and needs only moral and religious direction to overcome bad nurture? Or is he innately sinful and wicked by nature and in need of radical transformation? I want us to review this teaching of the Lord Jesus and come to some conclusions about this age old question.

2) ...was a devastating blow to the credibility of Jesus ministry.

3) Matthew 23:4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

3) ...covetous world of materialism and yet the sin of covetousness is not soaked into me, it originates in my heart after a single glance. When just is conceived it is conceived in the heart not the world.

4) ...this religion has always been about the heart. Warren Weisbe said Moses made it clear in Deuteronomy that God wanted love and obedience to come from the heart, and not be merely outward obedience to rules. Deuteronomy 6:4-5 Hear O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD. And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all mine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. Deuteronomy 10:12 And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,

1) Rabbi Eleazer said, "He who expounds the Scriptures in opposition to the tradition has no share in the world to come."

The Mishna, a collection of Jewish traditions in the Talmud, records, "It is a greater offense to teach anything contrary to the voice of the Rabbis than to contradict Scripture itself."

2) ...down that middle wall of partition that separated between the Jew and Gentile. That ceremonial wall that will be eventually obliterated at the foot of an old rugged cross. Ephesians 2:14-15

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

3) ...covetous world of materialism and yet the sin of covetousness is not soaked into me, it originates in my heart after a single glance. When lust is conceived it is conceived in the heart not the world!

4) ...true religion has always been about the heart. Warren Weirsbe said Moses made it clear in Deuteronomy that God wanted love and obedience to come from the heart, and not be merely outward obedience to rules: Deuteronomy 6:4-5 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. Deuteronomy 10:12 And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,

for their own benefit. Rabbi Eliezer said (1)  
You will find this in the Catholic Religion  
who hold to their traditions of sacramental  
ism, and priesthood. You'll find in Methodist  
ist, presb, Pentecostal + Baptist church <sup>traditions</sup> more or less the same

III. The Straightforward Communication to  
the People (vs 14-16) - Jesus was always mindful  
of the crowd listening in. And in Jesus few  
words to the crowd, He begins to knock down that

A. Communication Concerning True Right-  
eousness (vs 15) - He is clearly saying  
that outward righteousness is no  
replacement for inward righteousness.

Many of these Pharisees looked outwardly  
righteous but inwardly they were crooked  
as a dogs hind leg. Also sinfulness doesn't  
come from the outside. It comes from within.  
It tears down the whole devil made me do  
it syndrome. We can live in a courteous world of <sup>3</sup> may

B. Communication Concerning True Reli-  
gion (vs 15) - Some would initially think  
Jesus is lowering the religious bar. We don't  
have to do all that hand washing and eating  
certain things. But Jesus is really raising

the bar of religion to an unreachable  
place. It's easy to go thru the motions of  
religion and not worry about the heart. But  
to weekly, daily, hourly, moment by moment  
guard the heart, what a task. But true religion <sup>4</sup>

#### IV. The Stunning Clarification to His Pupils

(Vs 17-23) What Jesus had just taught seems obvious to us but to these disciples brought up under "clean" & "unclean" this was radical. <sup>to change</sup> It's not easy

#### A. Outward Ceremony Does not Cleanse

(Vs 18-19) Jesus illustrates his teaching with a biology lesson. Food goes into the stomach it is digested and is expelled out of the body. It does not touch the heart the mind, the seat of emotions the soul. These outward ceremonies are wet hands, waving arms and nothing more to God because they don't effect the heart. OT priestly rituals were for teaching not cleansing.

#### B. Inward Sin is What Corrupts - (Vs 20-23)

Here the Lord Jesus pulls back the lid off of the human heart and soul. These are what are already there! They weren't soaked in by family, community, friends in society as a whole. The heart of man has no divine spark but a depraved sea of sin. That's why Jesus came! To change our sinful hearts, to forgive our sins. Yes, Christians sin. We fall and not due to God!

V. Closing - We talked to a man - a people about the Lord! Oh, yes I know I need to get back in church & serving the Lord. They miss the whole point. It's not your hands it's your heart!

- 1) Romans 8:1-4 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.